



Facing the Facts

The State of Hispanic Education 1994

*A Fact Sheet produced by the
ASPIRA Institute for Policy Research*

Hispanic Families

● The Hispanic population in the U.S. is growing much faster than the rest of the population. Between 1980 and 1993, the Hispanic population had grown 56%, to 22.8 million people — 9% of the national population. If Puerto Rico is included, the number of Hispanics is 26.3 million or 10% of the total population. In the same period the non-Hispanic population grew by only 6.8%.

● The Hispanic population is statistically younger than the non-Hispanic population. In 1993, the median age was 26.7 years for Hispanics and 34.4 years for non-Hispanics. Thirty percent of the Hispanic population but only 22% of the non-Hispanic population was under 15 years of age.

● In 1992, 26.2% of Hispanic families lived in poverty, while the corresponding figure for non-Hispanic Whites was 7.3%. This figure represents a 3% increase for Hispanics from the previous year—the highest among ethnic groups.

● Children are particularly vulnerable to poverty. Nearly 40% of Hispanic and 20% of non-Hispanic children under the age of 18 years old lived in poverty in 1992. Hispanic children accounted for over one-fifth of all U.S. children living in poverty in that same year. In 1992, more than half (52%) of all Puerto Rican children were living in poverty.

● Parents' education level plays an important role in whether or not children will live in poverty. In 1990, 37% of Hispanic children whose parents had a grade school education or less lived in poverty, compared to 19% of children whose parents were high school graduates and 14% of children whose parents had continued their education beyond high school.

Education Spending and Personnel

● Spending on education now accounts for nearly half (47%) of state and local budgets. State spending increased

for both K-12 and higher education between fiscal years 1993 and 1994.

● Large urban school districts, which have a 28.9% Hispanic enrollment, are chronically under-funded compared to other districts in the states. While dealing with more disadvantaged students, large urban districts were allotted an average of \$5,200 per pupil in 1991, compared with \$6,073 for suburban schools. That amount was also below the \$5,512 national average.

● Sixty-six percent of black elementary and secondary school students and 73% of Hispanic students attended schools that were predominantly composed of minorities in the 1991-92 school year. However, in 1993, only 8% of teachers were Black and 3% were Hispanic.

Preprimary Education

● For all races, children from families earning under \$20,000 are approximately half as likely to be enrolled in nursery school classes as children from families earning over \$40,000.

● At all income levels, a smaller percentage of Hispanic children are enrolled in nursery school than other children. In 1992, 18.3% of Hispanic 3-4 year olds were enrolled in nursery school, compared to 29.2% of Black children, and 34.6% of White children.

Elementary and Secondary Education

● Hispanic students made up 11.6% of all elementary school students and 10.4% of high school students enrolled in 1992. However, they made up one-fifth of schoolchildren whose families earned less than \$20,000.

● The number of Hispanic children in central city schools doubled between 1973 and 1991, rising to 20.6% of total enrollment. It is projected that Hispanic enrollment will

increase 54%, from 3.3 million students in 1985-86 to 5.1 million in 1994-95.

●Hispanic 12-19 year olds are more likely than any other group to report the presence of street gangs in their schools. One in two Hispanics, one in three Whites, and 42% of Blacks reported that gangs operated in their schools in 1992.

●Hispanic youth are also likely to report having been physically attacked at their school -- 15% of Hispanic students in the 12th grade, 18% of those in the 10th grade, and 22% of those in the 8th grade reported such an incident in 1992.

●Hispanic high school students aged 16-24 are generally more likely than Black students but less likely than Whites to be working while enrolled in school. However, Hispanics are far more likely than other high school students to work 35 hours a week or more. Among Hispanics, 3.7% compared to 2.2% of all students worked at least full time while in high school in 1992.

●Hispanic scores on the Scholastic Achievement Tests (SAT) have in general improved from the mid-1970's to 1992, although they were at least 40 points lower than the national average.

●More than 1,200 colleges and universities accept Advanced Placement (AP) test scores for credit or placement. Between 1992-93, the number of Hispanics taking college-level AP tests increased by 14%.

●Between 1982 and 1990, Hispanic high school graduates devoted an increasing share of their total high school course-work to the recommended core courses, from 6.3% to 32.7%. Black and Asian students showed similar increases, while White students increased the time they spent on core courses from 14.9% to 40.5%.

Factors Affecting School Retention

●Researchers continue to find large differences in dropout rates between socioeconomic groups. In 1992, 44.7% of Hispanic students aged 16-24 from low-income families dropped out, compared to 25.2% from middle-income families and 9.6% from high-income families.

●Migration is a contributing factor to the high Hispanic dropout rate, but it does not completely account for it. While 31% of all Hispanic 16-24 year olds had dropped out of school by 1989, the figure was 43% for those who had been born outside the mainland U.S. However, dropout rates for first- and second-generation Hispanic youth were still well above the national norm -- 17.3% for first generation and 23.7% for second generation youth.

●Ability to speak English factors significantly in a student's capacity to stay in school. In 1992, of those Hispanics who did not speak English well, 62% dropped out of high school, compared to the 17% dropout rate of students who did speak English well.

●During the 1991-92 school year, there were 2.31 million limited English proficient (LEP) students in the United States -- a 70% increase from 1984 -- and 3 out of 4 of these students spoke Spanish as their home language. Despite this number, 45% of districts with LEP students reported offering no instruction that used the native language, thus causing students to fall behind in content classes as they struggled to learn English.

●In 1992, students who had repeated grades seven through nine had a much higher dropout rate (34.1%) than students who were retained in grades K-6 (16.7%) or 10-12 (19.1%). Students who had never been retained had an average dropout rate of 9.4%.

●The average number of years of school attended by Hispanics of all ages was 10.2 years in 1992. This

Percentage of 16-24 year olds who are high school dropouts

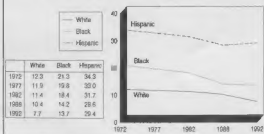


figure continues to increase, although Hispanics still have less years of education than the general population.

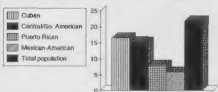
College Education

● Hispanics are less likely than other groups to be in college. Although they were 17.7% of the population age 15-24, they were only 7.8% of students enrolled in college in the fall of 1992.

● More Hispanics are going to college after high school. Between 1980 and 1991, the college participation rate for Hispanic high school graduates age 18-24 increased from 29.9% to 34.4%, while the participation of Whites also increased from 32.5% to 41.1%.

● Although the educational attainment of parents is a significant factor in whether or not a student will attend college, it is less so for Hispanic students. More than 80% of both White and Black children whose parents finished four or more years of college participated in post-secondary education, compared to the less than 60% of Hispanic children in 1991.

Percent of population 25 and over with a bachelor's degree



● Hispanics are the only major ethnic group to be more likely to attend two-year than four-year colleges. More than 52% of Hispanic undergraduates were attending two-year colleges in 1992, compared to 36% of Blacks and 36% of Whites.

● More Hispanics, Blacks, and Whites get their Bachelor's degrees in Business than in any other area of study, followed by the Social Sciences and Education. The Bachelor's Degree in Business is most popular among Asian Americans as well, but they choose Engineering second and Social Sciences third.

● In 1992, more than half (52.3%) of the Hispanic population came from families with incomes of less than \$20,000. This may account in part for Hispanic college students being slightly more likely to be employed full-time while attending college part-time (26.8% compared to 25.3% of Whites and 21.6% of Blacks).

● The average cost (tuition/fees, supplies, room/board, and transportation) of attending a public college or university in 1992-93 was \$8,071. For a private institution it was \$17,027. Median household income in 1992 was \$32,311 for all non-Hispanic White households, \$22,688 for all Hispanic households, and \$17,967 for all Puerto Rican households.

● After adjusting for inflation, public college costs increased 26% and private college costs increased 43% from 1982 to 1991. Overall median family income increased by 11%.

● Federal grant and work-study programs increased their funds by 34% from 1983-84 to 1991-92, after adjusting for inflation. State grant programs increased by 31% and institutional and other grants increased by 104.5%. Guaranteed federal loan program funds increased by 32.4%. Yet because expanding numbers of students apply and qualify for financial aid, the average amount received per individual has actually declined in real dollars for most federal grant and loan programs.

● The amount of student costs covered by the Pell Grant Program has decreased over the past decade. In 1979-80, Pell Grants paid for 77% of the average institutional charges at a public four-year college or university, but by 1992-93, Pell Grants covered only 39% of those costs.

● Thirty-six percent of Latino undergraduates received federal aid in 1989 -- an 8% decrease from 1986. However, institutional aid to Latino students increased over the same period of time. In 1986, colleges and universities awarded grants to 14.7% of their Hispanic students, compared to grants awarded to 16.2% of Hispanic students in 1989. Yet this increase is not sufficient as Hispanic students still receive less financial aid than students from any other ethnic group.

● About 38% of all Hispanics who started college completed four or more years by ages 25-29 in 1991. Although this was well below the 53% completion rate for White students, it marked an improvement over completion rates in the 1970's, which hovered around 33%.

• Women of all races were more likely than men to earn their Bachelor's Degree in four years or less. In 1990, 38% of Hispanic females, 36% of Blacks, and 51% of Whites completed a Bachelor's degree in four years.

• Hispanics do not participate in and do not complete graduate education proportionate to their population. From 1985 to 1991, the number of Hispanics receiving master's degrees increased by 27%. However, these gains did not keep pace with the growth of the Hispanic population aged 20 to 26, which increased 51% from 1980 to 1990. As a result, in 1991 only 2.5% of all master's degrees were awarded to Hispanics.

• Women have made significant gains in the number of doctorates earned over the past decade. The number of Hispanic women earning doctorates has increased 85% from 1982 to 1992, while the number of Hispanic men earning doctorates increased by 17% over the same period of time.

School to Work Transition

• In 1992, 62.8% of all recent high school graduates were employed, but only 53.9% of Hispanic graduates had a job.

• Overall, employment rates are higher for those with more education, especially among women. In 1992, among 25-29 year olds, 85.1% of all women with four or more years of college were employed, more than twice the percentage of working high school dropouts. Among men, 88.5% of college graduates and 68.3% of high school dropouts were employed.

• Hispanic women who were 25-34 years old with a Bachelor's degree earned a median annual income of \$23,865 in 1992, more than twice as much high school graduates (\$11,938), and more than two and a half times as much as high school dropouts (\$9,578).

• Hispanic men who were 25-34 years old with a Bachelor's degree earned a median annual income of \$27,609 in 1992, compared to the \$17,093 of high school graduates and \$12,301 of high school dropouts.

• Although both White and Hispanic women earn less than their male counterparts, there are fewer discrepancies between their earnings than those of White and Hispanic men. In 1992, the median income of Hispanic men was 44% that of White men, while the median income of Hispanic women was 77% of White women.

• One in four working adults overall, but less than one in five Hispanics, have received work-related training on their job.

• The percentage of year-round, full-time workers with low earnings increased for all workers from 1969 to 1990. However, workers with less than twelve years of schooling were three times more likely to earn low wages in 1990 than workers with 13 or more years of schooling.

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